

February 21, 2012

Council of Presidents:

We are writing on behalf of the Claremont Colleges Intercollegiate Faculty Council to express our concern about events surrounding the visit of Dr. Condoleezza Rice's visit to the colleges this fall. In particular we are concerned about an apparent violation of the letter and the spirit of the Demonstration Policy approved by the Council of Presidents of the Claremont Colleges in November 2001, and published in the student handbooks of most of the colleges.

The preamble to that policy states: "Each of these member institutions respects the rights of free speech and peaceable assembly and supports their exercise. However, when the exercise of speech and assembly becomes disruptive or non-peaceable, and infringes upon the rights of others, threatens property or public safety, or impedes the business of the member Colleges or CUC, the individual Colleges and CUC will act according to this policy." That document also delineates actions that may be taken when a demonstration or protest has been deemed "materially disruptive and non-peaceful".

Our concern is with the limitations on peaceful protest associated with the visit of Dr. Condoleezza Rice to the Claremont Colleges on Wednesday, November 30. Our concerns extend both to the treatment of peaceful protesters on the CMC campus prior to Dr. Rice's evening lecture as well as the treatment of a Pitzer College faculty member who was an invited guest at a CMC sponsored luncheon held at the Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles.

Dr. Rice's evening talk at CMC was moved from the Athenaeum to the Ducey Gym, apparently because of concerns about security. According to the Claremont Portside article on the protest (available on-line at <http://www.claremontportside.com/recap-of-condoleezza-rices-visit/>), "Ducey Gym was entirely fenced off, with numerous private security guards inside. A 'protest area,' separated by fencing from the entrance to Ducey Gym, was set up by CMC." This report was also confirmed by testimony from 7-College participants involved in the protest. We are extremely troubled by the contradiction between a policy supporting the right of peaceable assembly and the attempt to restrict the peaceful assembly to a fenced off area, even when there was no reason for the perception of a threat to security. We feel that this action contravened the existing policy, particularly by imposing unwarranted restraints on the time and location of speech. In our opinion, only the minimum restraint needed to allow the functioning of the colleges without otherwise interfering with free speech rights should be imposed. It is our opinion that constraining peaceful and non-disruptive protesters by setting up artificial barriers and attempting to restrict protests in a fenced-in area is neither in keeping with the existing policy nor appropriate for an educational institution where the right to free speech is valued.

Secondly we are concerned by the actions taken against an invited guest at the luncheon sponsored by CMC that was held for Dr. Rice at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles. This invited guest, a faculty member at Pitzer, offered information cards listing charges directed at Dr. Rice regarding her actions in the Bush administration to other luncheon guests. Security guards at the lunch and, as reported by the Pitzer faculty member, CMC employees attempted to stop the individual from distributing the cards and threatened to eject him from the luncheon and have him arrested. While the demonstration policy refers to on-campus events, this case highlights the need to develop a more comprehensive demonstration policy

that also provides appropriate safeguards for the exercise of rights to free speech and assembly at off-campus venues of events sponsored by CUC member institutions.

We are concerned about the limitations on peaceable non-disruptive speech exhibited at these two events and call upon the Council of Presidents to both reaffirm and revise their Demonstration Policy to take account of the concerns noted above, and to affirm that these attempted restrictions on free speech that occurred during the Rice visit to CMC are inimical to the values that we as educational institutions should be supporting. We would be happy to meet with you to discuss the issues raised in this letter.

Sincerely,

The Claremont Colleges Intercollegiate Faculty Council

Kim Bruce (Pomona College)

Paul Hurley (Claremont McKenna College)

Kerry Karukstis (Harvey Mudd College)

Julie Liss (Scripps College)

Lorne Olfman (Claremont Graduate University)

Animesh Ray (Keck Graduate Institute)

Dan Segal (Pitzer College)